

See Mr. Prince's

Mr. Prince's
FUNERAL SERMON
ON
THE REVEREND
Dr. Cotton Mather.

MR. PRINCE'S
GENERAL SERMON

OF
THE
DR. MEMBER.



K

The Departure of ELIJAH lamented.

A
S E R M O N

Occasioned

By

the Great & Publick Loss

I N

the **Decease**

O F

the very REVEREND & LEARNED

Cotton Mather, D. D.

F. R. S.

And Senior Pastor of the *North Church* in

B O S T O N :

Who left this Life on *Feb. 13th 1727, 8.*

The Morning after He finished the LXV Year
of his Age.

By **THOMAS PRINCE, M. A.**
And one of the Pastors of the South Church.

Joh. V. 35. He was a burning and a shining Light.

B O S T O N in *New-England* :
Printed for *D. Henchman*, near the Brick
Meeting Houle in Cornhil.

M D C C X X V I I I .

The Department of Public Instruction

2 E R M O N

Occasional

By

The Great & Public Lod

In

the Decade

Of

the very Reverend & Learned

Cotton Mather, D.D.



And senior

BOYTON

Who left this life on Feb. 1st 1772

The Morning after he finished the LXV Year
of his Age

11

By THOMAS PRINCE, M.A.
Chaplain of the Society of the South Church

Printed at the New England Printing Office

BOYTON in New England

Printed for M. Mather, at the New England Printing Office

Funeral Sermon.

LORD'S-DAY Morning, Feb. 18. 1727, 8.

2 KINGS II. 12, 13.

AND Elisha saw it and He cried, MY FATHER, MY FATHER, THE CHARIOT OF ISRAEL AND THE HORSEMEN THEREOF: and He saw Him no more: and He took hold of his own Cloaths and rent them in two pieces: He took up also the Mantle of ELIJAH that fell from Him.

THE Words contain the passionate Lamentations & Behaviour of *Elisha*, upon the surprizing Rapture of his Master *ELIJAH* from Him up towards Heaven.

THIS extraordinary Prophet being aware of this approaching Event, He seems to be scrupulous whether any shou'd be with Him at the wonderful Instant. He therefore begs even *Elisha*, who had very faithfully ministred to Him in his laborious Office and was appointed his chief Successor, to tarry when He set out from *Gilgal*, and then at *Bethel* and *Jericho*, while He travelled further at the Divine Direction. But both *Elisha* and the other *Sons of the Prophets* had been by some means or other apprized, that *ELIJAH* was to be this Day taken away in an extraordinary manner. And while *Fifty* of them went and

and stood on some eminent Ascent to view afar off and see what wou'd happen ; *Elisba* resolves to keep Him company to the moment of his Departure.

BUT ELIJAH was to pass the River *Jordan* in order to his Translation. And when they came to the Banks, He took his Mantle and wrapt it together and smote the Waters, and they were divided hither and thither ; so that they two went over on dry Ground. And as they still went on and talked ---- And Oh, how divine and heavenly was the Converse ! ---- Behold there appeared a *Chariot of Fire and Horses of Fire*, which parted them asunder, and ELIJAH went up by a *Whirlwind* into Heaven.

THE Chariot & Horses of Fire cou'd be only bright appearances in such distinguishing Figures. And they were no doubt a sort of pure material Substances which the Holy *Angels* made use of to do the greater Honour to this highly favoured Prophet in his triumphant Ascention. Whether it were a peculiar sort of substance as pure as that of Light, annexed to their Spirits (as our Bodies are to ours) and they carry always about them for their various and continual uses ; or whether a Substance they occasionally seized for this particular end ; it is easy to imagine, those mighty *Intelligences* cou'd when they please put it into such a singular Arrangement and Action as to give it the appearance of a shining Body, and to dispose it into what Figures were proper to accomplish their divine Commission.

AND it seems very plain as if *Elisba* saw ELIJAH ascend into the Chariot. For wherefore shou'd there be the appearance of such a *Medium* of conveyance, unless it were in a visible manner to receive & transport the ascending Prophet ? And even the Vapours of this inferiour *Atmosphere* are very strongly mov'd into a rising Eddy or Whirlwind, as a suitable Instrument in the safe Hands of *Angels* to raise the Prophet as high as the Air extends ; and then they wou'd

wou'd proceed to carry Him by their more immediate Power.

AND Elisha saw it, and He cried, &c.

HE saw it --- and happy it was for Him; inasmuch as this was the Token which had just before been given Him, that He shou'd have a double Portion of ELIJAH's Spirit: and the very Power of seeing this Angelical Appearance seems to be a special Favour and Work of God, and as much a Miracle as the seeing the like Appearance afterwards by *Elisha's* Servant when his Eyes were opened, 2 Kings VI. 17.

AND He cried --- as one that was greatly mov'd at the Parting of his most dear and admired Master.

MY Father! My Father! --- As a Declaration of ELIJAH's great Superiority both in Age, Graces, Gifts, Authority; and as a filial Expression of the highest Reverence and Affection for Him.

THE Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen thereof. He plainly takes the Metaphor from the present Appearance of the *Chariot & Horses* before his Eyes. From the view of *these* receiving and rising up with the Prophet, He cries out after Him, as the departing Chariot and Horsemen of *Israel*; i. e. Their Strength and Glory, their Defence & Safety. (v)

AND He saw Him no more. ---

He doubtless looked after Him till both ELIJAH and the fiery Chariot had ascended out of sight; and then He saw Him no more --- a sorrowful Expression, implying the melancholy Loss of Him whose Company had been the Delight of his Heart, and whose Presence was his Eyes Desire.

(v) Varii in Pol. Synopsi.

AND

A Funerall Sermon

AND He took hold of his own Cloaths, and rent them into two pieces. An antient Token of great and inexpressible Sorrow. A passionate Action that signified how their Hearts were rent with Distress and Anguish, what little Comfort they took in any thing left, as if they cared not what wou'd become of their Bodies, and how little they minded the things that were most ornamental or useful for them. (j)

HE took up also the Mantle of ELIJAH that fell from Him.

Any thing left of ELIJAH was dear to Him, and especially the characteristical Mantle which He seems to have dropped as He was ascending into the Chariot. And *Elisha* readily takes it up, both out of Esteem and Affection to Him, as a precious Remain & Memorial of Him, and as a sacred Instrument He wou'd make great use of, both for the Glory of God and his own Advantage. And thus He quickly applies it in smiting and dividing the Waters, as ELIJAH before Him, and returning thro' *Jordan*.

HAVING thus descanted briefly on the Text, our OBSERVATIONS may now be these —

1. EMINENT Ministers have the style of *Fathers* very properly given them.
2. THEY are in a great measure the Glory, Strength, Defence & Safety of a People.
3. IT is a very melancholy thing to loose them and see them no more.
4. THEIR Departure should be sadly resented and express'd by Survivours.
5. and lastly, WE shou'd highly value and carefully improve the Remains of their Ministry.

Obf. I. *THAT* eminent Ministers have the style of *Fathers* very properly given them.

(j) A. Jackson on Gen. 37. 29.

THIS

THAT on many accounts is one of the most honourable Titles among the Sons of Men. It originally comprizes in it a Priority in Nature, Existence or Age; a Derivation of Being and Good things to others; a superiority of Knowledge, Wisdom, Power, Authority and Government; a gracious, tender and condescending Affection to those who are under them, are derived from them, or are dependent on them; a great Concern & Care for their welfare; and the constant Expression of *this*, in Providing for, supporting, defending them, and in Promoting their Happiness -- as by Instruction, Example, Council, Admonition, Correction, Incouragement, and by all proper measures that can be devised.

SUCH things as these are contain'd in the complex Term of a *Father*. And what more excellent Ideas are found in any humane Title whatever? No wonder then that the greatest, best and wisest of Princes, Kings and Emperors have chose to be styled *the Fathers of their People*; as comprehending and exhibiting every thing both superior, indearing and desirable in their Relation to them. And thus even the most Glorious God is pleased to entitle Himself *the Father of all* *: CHRIST is called *the Everlasting Father* with respect to his People †: and the FIRST PERSON in the adorable Trinity, *the Father of CHRIST*. ‡

AND upon many of those accounts above mentioned is this Title applied to *Ministers*, and especially the more ancient and eminent, in the sacred Writings ||. Thus *Elisha* cried out in the Text to his Master ELIJAH -- *My Father, My Father*. And the same Title did a great King of *Israel* bestow on *Elisha*, a few years after, 2 Kings XIII. 14. Now *Elisha* was fallen sick of his sickness whercof He died; and *Joash*

* Eph. IV. 6. † 1st Cor. IX. 6. ‡ Eph. I. 3. || 1st Cor. IV. 15. † Thes. II. 11. † Tim. V. 1.

A Funeral Sermon

the King of Israel came down unto Him, and wept over his Face, and said — O MY FATHER, MY FATHER ! the Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen thereof.

AND how properly is this Title applied —

FOR as they grow up in Eminence, they grow superior in Age, in Knowledge, Wisdom & Goodness, and in every Excellence that makes them more esteemed & venerable. They become the Means of the spiritual Regeneration of many, and so the spiritual Fathers of many spiritual Children : and for these they have a very fatherly Affection & Care. They instruct, advise, forewarn, exhort, reprove, and also chasten with their spiritual Discipline. They govern their People, not with a lordly, but parental Authority ; full of Condescension, Impartiality, Wisdom & Tenderness, as a Father his natural Offspring. In fine, They Provide for their spiritual Wants, defend them from their spiritual Dangers, encourage and comfort them, seek after their Salvation and Happiness ; and set such Examples as to draw their People's Affection, as well as raise their high Esteem & Reverence.

IN such respects as these, may *eminent Ministers* be very properly called our *Fathers* : especially when they grow riper with Age, Experience and Goodness, and come to cast a Veneration round about them.

BUT our

II. Obl. is, *That these eminent Fathers are in a great measure the Glory, Strength, Defence and Safety of their People.*

As they are Neighbours with respect to all Mankind, their Views & Cares are extended to the whole of the Species. They are greatly concerned for the Welfare of all : And as they are dear to God, and have a powerful Interest at the Throne of Grace, they earnestly Pray for the same, and as far as their Influence

ance can reach they endeavour it. Like the Lights of Heaven, tho' they move in their proper Orbs, they send out their Virtues to the remotest Regions. And in these respects they may well be accounted the Glory, Strength, Defence & Safety of this lower World.

BUT they are especially so, with respect to the People among whom they dwell. For all this seems to be signified in their being styled *The Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen thereof*. For these are military Terms: and Chariots and Horsemen, were in ancient Times, the warlike Glory and Strength of Kingdoms, as well as their Defence and Safety.

INDEED, The great and blessed God in CHRIST is these in a most transcendent manner*. And between Him and the most eminent Ministers there is no Comparison. They derive all they have intirely from Him, they perpetually depend on his Influence, and they are as nothing and less than nothing before Him. They can neither preserve, nor defend, nor strengthen, nor move, nor shine, nor exist without Him: and all that they have and perform is, but by a diminutive Ray of Power and Light streaming forth from Him the Fountain and acting in them.

AND, next to this most Glorious Being, but in an infinitely lower Degree, we must ascribe the Honour to his *Holy and powerful Angels*, who are vastly superiour in Strength and Wisdom to the most eminent Men. They are mighty to save; and as a flaming Fire they burn, as a Flash of Light they fly to do his Pleasure for his Covenant-People. *Psal. CIII, 20, 21. & CIV. 4.*

In this lower World, in it's present State, they for the most part keep themselves invisible. But we read of their continual Presence and Agency, in the Scrip-

* *Psal. LXXXIX. 17, 18. Isa. XXVIII. 5, 6. Zech. II. 1.*

turns of Truth: And sometimes they brake out and
 discover themselves. Sometimes in the Forms of most
 lovely Men, and at others they only give us the *visi-*
ble *Busins* of their active Presence. Thus they did
 in the Chariots and Horses of Fire to these two Pro-
 phets; and thus afterwards, both to *Elisha* and his
 astonished Servant; when the King of Syria had sent
 Horses and Chariots, and a great Host, to seize on
Elisha in *Dothan*; and they came by night and
 compass'd the City round about. 2 Kings VI. 17.
 And when the Servant of the Man of *G O D* was
 risen early and gone forth, behold an Host compas-
 sed the City, both with Horses and Chariots: and
 his Servant said unto Him, Alas! my Master! How
 shall we do? And He answered, Fear not, for they
 that be with us are more than they that be with them.
 And *Elisha* prayed & said, Lord I pray thee open
 his Eyes, that He may see. And the Lord opened
 the Eyes of the young Man, and He saw: and be-
 hold the Mountain was full of Horses & Chariots of
 Fire round about *Elisha*.

THESE Horses and Chariots of Fire were only the
 visible *Busins* of an Host of Angels: and the Pro-
 phet inform'd us, they were more in number than
 the Great Host that compass'd the City. And by
 the Story it seems they were at the same time visible
 to the favoured Prophet, while they were not so to
 the Servant with Him. And this seems plainly to
 intimate, that these powerful Agents may make a very
 shining Appearance about us, which may be clearly
 seen both to themselves, and those whose Eyes are
 formed to discern the Vision; while the Eyes of others
 in their natural Frame are incapable of it. Thus
 there are great numbers of Stars in the Firmament
 that diffuse their glorious Beams around us; and some
 perceive them, while others see nothing in the Places
 where they appear but a perfect Blank or Darkness.
 And there are a great many others of these heavenly
 Lamps that pour their Rays into every Eye, and yet
 are seen by none till some optical Instrument be set
 before us, and then we discover them.

BUT yet *eminent Ministers* are in a great Degree the Glory and Safety of the People they live with. So *Elisba* pronounces of his Master *ELIJAH*, even in the Presence of *Angels* that were taking Him up to bare Him away. *My Father, my Father!* — You are got into a glorious Chariot with Horses of Fire — But Thou art the Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen thereof — And what shall we do when thou art taken away?

NOW was this a Title peculiar to the Prophet *ELIJAH*. We have the same ascribed to his Successor *Elisba*, as He was departing by a natural Death, in that forementioned 1 Kings XIII. 14. And whatever other eminent Ministers have been like to them in their Day, among a Covenant-People, may as well be styled the Chariots of Israel and the Horsemen thereof.

ON what accounts were they the agreeable subjects of this illustrious Character; but for their shining Light, their burning Zeal, their fervent Prayers, their laborious Endeavours for the Revival of pure & dying Religion in *Israel*? By this means they appeared the Glory of that degenerate People, they kept them from a total Apostacy, they preserved the Life of Religion among them, they prevailed with God to spare them from ruinous Judgments, and often to prosper them against their powerful Enemies.

AND when there are other eminent Ministers in a degenerate Land, who shine & burn as they, with an heavenly Life and flaming Zeal, with fervent intercessions to God, and earnest addresses to *Men* to turn and be saved — Like those two Prophets, they must needs be the Glory and Safety of the People they live with.

AND what tho' they be Men of like *Infirmities and Passions* with others; yet this no more hinders them from this distinguishing Character than it did

ELIJAH

ELIJAH of old. For of Him the Apostle observes in Jam. V. 11. ELIAS was a man subject to like Passions as we are. He has been styled by some a very zealous and fiery spirited Prophet. In his Zeal He commanded all the Priests of Baal, viz. nine hundred and fifty to be slain at once, and would not suffer so much as one to escape *. He prayed for Fire to come down from Heaven and destroy two Captains with their Fifties successively, when they were sent by the King of Israel to bid Him come down to him †. At other-times He seem'd to be much discontented that He had no better success and acceptance, and at the Persecution and Hatred of Enemies. In some Hours of Temptation He was too weary of Life; He wish'd He might die, and too much complains of the Hardships and Ill-treatment He met with ‡. And yet after all, He was the Chariot of Israel, their Glory and Safety.

AND much less can the Hatred, Reproaches or Persecutions of any debarr them of this eminent Character. For ELIJAH was called by Ahab the Troubler of Israel, 1 King. XVIII. 16. And Jezebel was his inveterate Enemy, vow'd his Destruction, and made Him fly & hide for his Life, 1 King. XIX. 6, &c.

IN the midst of all their Imperfections & Sufferings, they live a heavenly Life; they instruct by their Doctrine, they oppose the Torrent of prevailing Iniquity, they fight against the Powers of Darkness, they carry the Standard, and they lead in the van of the Battle: they have a powerful Interest in the Courts above, they improve it incessantly in importunate Prayers for the People they live with in a particular manner: and they contrive and try every method to preserve and advance the Religion of CHRIST, in the Power, Practice and Purity of it, upon which only depends their Safety & Happiness. ●

1 King. XVIII. † 1 King. I. ‡ 1 King. XIX.

OUR

OUR

III. Obf. therefore is this, *That it is a very melancholy thing to loofe them and fee them no more.*

COMFORTABLE indeed it is to think, that fince they have left us, they are gone to Heaven. They have ceafed from Sinning and Sorrowing, they are divested of all their Infirmities, compleatly purged from their Corruptions, made perfect in Light and Holinefs; releafed from all their Cares, Pains, Toils and Burdens; have refted from their wearifom Labours, and their good works have followed them in a full Retribution of Joy and Glory.

BUT this would have been their Portion if they had tarried *longer* with us: and there was no need of their being taken away, in order to fecure this Reft and Happinefs. If they had been continued longer, even as long as they cou'd have been ufeul to us, either by their Preaching, Converfation or living Examples; their future Glory wou'd have been in no wife indanger'd or leffened; a greater weight and meafure had been rather laid up and ready to crown them. It would have been far more comfortable and advantagious to *Us*; and even *They* would have had their Confolations, and Supports enough even Here, with their future Prospects, to make amends for all their Labours, Pains and Sorrows while converfant with us.

To *loofe them* then, i. e. to loofe their Company in this Prefent State, where we only want it; To loofe it in the midft of its delightful ufeulnefs, and to fee them no more — muft needs be very melancholy to thofe who knew them, who ufed to fee and hear them, and converse with them.

To *fee them no more* — is no more to fee their grave or fmiling Countenance; no more to fee their gracious and reviving Looks; no more to fee their decent and comely Carriage; no more to hear their lively & pleasant Voice, their flaming Sermons, their
Preaching

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Preaching CHRIST, their learned pious most instructive and entertaining Converse; no more to hear or see them in our Pulpits, to meet them in our Streets, or to receive them in our Houses! In fine, no more to have their earnest Prayers, their ready Help, their wise Advices, their great and quickning Influence in these degenerate times — But to loose them all, and to loose them for ever — O inexpressible Loss! insupportable Bereavement!

To lose a more *Private* Friend is a sorrowful Providence. But to loose a *Publick* Friend, a Friend to our Souls, a most able and faithful one, a zealous and great Promoter of our everlasting Interests: One who studied and laid out Himself to do us all the Good He cou'd, that appeared to be most earnest for our Salvation, and that grudg'd at no Pains nor Labours to secure it to us: An ardent Lover of the People He liv'd with; full of Zeal for the Publick Interest, for the Cause of pure, vital and practical Religion among all about Him; yea for the most extensive Kingdom and Glory of CHRIST, and the bringing as many as possible to the saving and happy Acquaintance with Him.

THE Loss of such as these must be very great and dismal, especially in Times of growing Declensions, when we have most need of them. And in proportion to their Eminence in Gifts and Graces, the greater and sadder the Loss: and this greater still, when on all accounts there are none left like them.

How dark is the Day when such a burning and shining Light is extinguished among us, or rather carried out of our sight, to blaze among others in the Worlds above; but to leave us in these gloomy Regions, and without any Hopes of it's returning again till the Heavens be no more!

OUR
IV. Obs. therefore naturally follows from this,
*That their Departure should be very sadly
resented and expressed by Survivors.*

So *Elisha* lets us the agreeable Pattern. He first cries out in an Agony --- *My Father, my Father, the Chariot of Israel and the Horsemen thereof*. And when *ELIJAH* was gone quite out of sight, and *Elisha* saw Him no more; then to exprels the greatness of the Anguish within Him, He takes hold of his own Cloaths and tares them into two pieces. It was an ancient signification of extraordinary Grief. And so deeply affected is *Elisha* with this most sore Bereavement, that tho' He was now all alone as to Men, yet He thus rends his Cloaths and vents his Sorrows in the Presence of God and his Angels.

ONE wou'd think *Elisha* had but little Reason to be in such great Distress; since *ELIJAH* was now gone to Heaven in so glorious and triumphant a manner, *Elisha* had been anointed his next Successor, and promis'd a double Portion of *ELIJAH*'s Spirit to discharge the Office; and now the Great Man was gone that shone so much above Him, but now had left Him the prime Place of Propheick Power and Dignity. But all these Apprehensions are quite swallowed up in the high Esteem and Reverence He bore to his departed Master. He rightly judged there was no Man like *ELIJAH*; and tho' He himself was to have a double Portion of his extraordinary Spirit in comparison with other Prophets, was left as it were his Eldest Son with a double Portion to the Rest of the Children; yet He expected not the full of his Father's Inheritance. He accounted the Loss to be in some respects irreparable, and expected not to see so great a Prophet on all accounts, again, as *ELIJAH*. For so great a Loss He therefore answerably grieves and mourns; and expresses his Grief in such a remarkable manner.

In this as I observed, He is a lively Example to us --- when eminent Ministers are taken away and we are to see them no more; for this, first to mourn in the affecting Sense of our heavy Bereavement, and then to express it in a suitable manner. --- Not by

tending

rending our Garments, as *Elisha* did, agreeable to the Custom that then prevailed in those Parts of the World; but by such evident *Symptoms*, as that all about us may clearly see we are duely sensible of our great Loss and are deeply affected.

SUCH as a serious, grave and solemn Look; especially when we speak or hear of the Prophet departed: a Restraint for a Time from our usual Mirth: a speaking of the eminent Virtues and Usefulness of the Deceased, our past Advantages in Him, our great Want of Him, and the sore Loss his Departure brings on the People He liv'd with: and if we have Tears to shed, let them gently flow.

BUT above all — We shou'd religiously express our Sorrow to God; as in *Humbling* ourselves to the Dust under the mighty Blow of his Hand in taking them away: in *Mourning* bitterly for all our past Negligence of them, and Unfruitfulness under their lively Ministry; for all the slights we have cast upon them, the Discouragements we have at any time thrown in the way of their Work, and the Wounds and Grievs we have given their Hearts: in fine, for all the *Sins* whereby we have provoked the righteous God to bereave us of their eminent Light & Labours; and for all the *Prospects* of those Evils we have reason to fear are coming upon us now they are taken away.

AND then, Let our Sorrow brake out in most earnest *Prayers* for Forgiveness and sparing Mercy: that the abused SPIRIT of CHRIST may not leave us with them, but that the same plentiful measures which appeared in them, may be poured out, both on surviving Ministers and on all the People; that his Work may revive in these declining Years, and we may return to the LORD and serve Him, continue his People, and He may never forsake us.

AND in order to this we shou'd also now put in Practice our

V. and

V. and last Obl. viz. *THAT* we highly value and carefully improve the Remains of their Ministry.

As ELIJAH ascended the Chariot, He dropped his Mantle for the Use of *Elisa* and others, as well as a precious Memorial of Him. And now when ELIJAH was gone out of sight, and *Elisa* had been rending his Cloaths in Agony, and from looking up after Him towards Heaven, came to turn his Eyes down to the Earth; How agreeably may we imagin did ELIJAH's Mantle appear before Him? How precious was the Remnant of his departed Master? How much dearer now than ever? And what cou'd He think the Mantle was left for, but as a Token of particular Favour, to support and comfort his distressed Spirit, and for his future Benefit? How gladly must He therefore see it, how soon take it up? How carefully He carries it about Him, and makes use of it in smiting and dividing the Waters?

AND does not this most obviously teach us, that the Remains of eminent Ministers should be highly prized and carefully improved among us?

By their Remains I mean the excellent *Writings* they have left behind them. These like ELIJAH's Mantle, were one special Means whereby they did such eminent Service while they lived: and which being consecrated to the same Design, may thro' the Grace of God have the same Success as well after their Departure as before.

In these Works of theirs we may yet in a great measure see them alive. There they have delivered their Souls: There they shine and burn: they breath and speak; they still express and publish their Minds; they instruct, reprove, exhort, persuade; and appear as earnest as ever to promote the Kingdom of CHRIST, to bring us into it, and to preserve and advance us in it.

AND O! How moving is it to read or hear in our Houses the lively Addresses of those that are now in Eternity, and that spake as standing on the Borders of it? They are speaking from Heaven in the rowzing Discourses they uttered and left on Earth; And if it had been in their Power, they would have continued their awakening *Voices* in our Ears, whenever we had a mind to hear it, as well as the printed *Marks* of the Sounds to be seen with our Eyes. In brief, they made them Publick, that their earnest Calls might not quickly die with the noise of their Lips, but continue to move us even after they are got into the *Worlds above*. And it may be, *There* they know and rejoice in the continued Fruit of their Labours among us: and *then* their Joys will vastly rise as we continue to use them, and are bettered by them.

AND as these works of theirs were once composed and delivered with much of the Influence of the SPIRIT of CHRIST, and it may be He breathed in them on the Hearts of the Hearers; They are still as agreeable to the same gracious Agent, and if we come to peruse them with a suitable Frame of Soul, He is as likely to breath as ever. So He continually breaths in the Writings of the ancient Prophets, as much, and indeed oftentimes more than when they were at first delivered,

How highly then should we value, and how carefully improve these remaining Fruits of their lively Ministry? especially seeing them so full of CHRIST and Devotion to Him, so full of ardent Love and Zeal for the Glory of God, and so full of Concern and Affection for the Souls of *Men*. In fine, so full of Light and Flame together, so full of the most useful Truths inspired in the sacred Writings, so agreeable to them, and so illustrative of them.

AND since we are now to see or hear these venerable Men no more; how much more precious shou'd their excellent Remains be accounted than ever, and
how

how much more carefully improved among us? In fine, They are the endearing Legacies of our spiritual Fathers, Golden Talents that we are accountable for—By our careful Improvement, they'll secure our Interest in the same heavenly Inheritance they are gone to possess; they'll ripen us for and in due time bring us to their glorious Company: And the more we improve them, the greater, when we meet in the Realm above, will be our mutual Joy.

AND thus having briefly treated of the several things observed, we pass to the

APPLICATION.

AND,

I. Do eminent Ministers in a special manner bear the Title of Fathers — *Then how should we respect and treat them both in their Persons and Memories.*

THE Title we see is full both of Loveliness and Veneration. And when those of the holy Order carry it as becomes this Paternal Character, as they do when they are really eminent; how truly venerable, and yet how lovely do they appear? And when they prove like *Fathers*; how highly should we reverence and love them while they are with us, and with what Respect and Honour treat their Names when they are ascended to Heaven?

THE Infirmities of *Fathers* should be reverently covered, their Persons affected, their Honour guarded, their Wants prevented, their Authority revered: their prayerful Blessings should be highly valued: their Affections, Cares, Pains and Labours liberally recompensed: And all the Reverence, Love, Obedience, Beneficence, and Returns of Gratitude and Justice due to our natural Fathers, are for the like Reasons owing to those who are our Fathers also in a more spiritual and exalted manner.

And should the Respect of Fathers cease when they come to die, or are passed away? No — it should rather

rather rise the higher—The very Prospect of their Removal shou'd excite our Fears, Reluctance & Cries to Heaven. Their dying Groans shou'd pierce our Hearts. Their faltering Speeches shou'd have our utmost Attention. When their Light of Life expires, it should look dark & solitary round about us. Their very bodily Remains should be accounted as precious Dust, and interred with Tears and Honour. They shou'd be long remembred and spoken of with tender affection: Their Virtues and good Actions praised, their Examples followed, their Characters preserved sacred, and their Names as perfumed ointment poured forth with Fragrancy in every Company.

2. ARE eminent Ministers the Glory, Strength, Defence and Safety of the People they live with. *Then how great is the Advantage of the People to have them, and how great is the Loss when they are taken away.*

THEIR Examples, Doctrines, Advices and Prayers are vast advantages *apparent* among us: But their *invisible* Influence at the Throne above, and their continual Importunities there, may draw down abundance of Blessings of the highest Importance, which yet may seem to come on in the Course of natural Causes. By their prevailing Intercessions with Heaven, even our most Publick Councils may be wisely guided, and our Publick Enterprizes may be happily prospered, while we see not the secret but powerful springs from whence they proceed.

WHEN they therefore depart, our Strength and Glory in a great measure go with them: and unless there are others raised up like them, we are by so much the more defenceless and exposed to Dangers.

AN unhappy stop is now put to their earnest Pleading for us, as well as their lively Preaching to us. They can now no more watch against our dangerous Enemies: nor contrive, nor labour for our Welfare

fare or Safety. Their various Opportunities, their great Abilities, their Zeal for serving us, are gone from us for ever: and even their living Example that use to charm & quicken us, is disappeared with them.

How wide is then the Gap in our Wall of Defence, how weak our Strength, how thin our Glory, upon their Removal from us? and how open are we to swift Inundations of Publick Calamities!

3. Is it a melancholy thing to loose them, and see them no more, and should their Departure be sadly resented & express'd by Survivours --- *Then how much should we mourn, and express our Sorrow this Day.*

ONE of the greatest of *Ministers* is fallen in *Israel*: or rather ascended to the heavenly Mansions; and left us a weak, exposed and degenerate People.

I may not take up your time in drawing his accurate Character: especially since I have had Him so much in my Heart and Eye thro' that Part of the Sermon I have delivered already, that you could not but think I have been chiefly speaking of Him, as our Tears have shown; and it would also require a Volumn for the full Description. I shall only give you a few *general Touches* further, to remind us, of our extraordinary Loss, and to point us to our present Duty.

He was, as you know, a Person of a wonderful *quick Apprehension*, tenacious Memory, lively Fancy, ready Invention, unwearied Industry: of vast Improvements in Knowledge, and flaming Picty. Full of Zeal & Activity for the Glory of *CHRIST* and the Salvation of *Men*. Greatly concerned for the Cause of pure & vital Religion: a strenuous Assertor of Liberty both civil & sacred: and of extensive Charity.

He was a zealous *Lover of our Churches and People*; because He saw so much of the pure Scriptural sort of Religion, with the exercise of Liberty & Charity

in them. He was always careful for them, always ready to espouse their Cause: and how much are the present and future Generations indebted, for the noble Care He has taken to preserve the *Memory* of the great and excellent Fathers of these religious Plantations, *that* was just a sinking into Oblivion?

He seem'd to have an inexhaustible Source of *divine Flame & Vigour*. Nor did this brake out only in a few particular Streams of Piety, but it unboundedly diffused it self into every Method that could be devised for the Glory of God and the Good of the *World*.

He was a wonderfull *Improver of Time*: and 'tis almost amazing how much He had read & studied — How much He has wrote and published — How much He corresponded abroad: not only with the several Provinces in the *British America*, but also with *England, Scotland, Ireland, Holland, Germany*, and even the *Eastern* as well as *Western Indies* — And yet how much he conversed, vilited, contrived and acted at Home! How many Languages, Histories, Arts and Sciences, both ancient and modern He was familiarly vers'd in — What a vast Amassment of *Learning* He had grasp'd in his Mind, from all sorts of Writings, of which He had one of the largest and richest Collections that ever was in these Ends of the Earth — and *which* He was at all times ready to use in the most sudden and *extempore* manner.

And yet, what was truly as admirable — He never seem'd to be in a *Hurry*. He would say some good and suitable thing to every one that came to Him; and He would always entertain us with Ease & Pleasure, even in his Studying Hours, as long as we pleas'd, or cou'd venture to hinder Him: making use of the most *unseasonable Visitants*, both to do more Good, and at the same time even advance Himself in Learning; by the most artful Repetition of the more agreeable Passages. He had lately been reading, with his own Remarks or Improvements upon them; whereby He

He further digested them, and more perfectly made them his own. --- Never negligent, never heavy, --- Tho' fatigu'd in Body, never tired in Mind. *To do all the Good He cou'd to all*, even to the remotest Ends of the Earth -- was his Maxim, his Study, his Labour, his Pleasure --- and 'tis strange to consider what a vast Variety of Projects He has formed and managed for it.

How lively and earnest was He in his *Publick Performances* --- Here we used to see his Spirits rais'd and all on Fire --- What a courageous Enemy to all Licentiousness ! What a Son of Thunder to impenitent Sinners ! What a Son of Consolation to discouraged Souls ! What a passionate Pleader with all to come into the Acceptance of CHRIST, and so into the Life and Favour of God ! And what a fervent Solicitor at the Throne of Grace !

And how instructive, learned, pious and engaging was He in his *private Converse* --- Superior Company for the greatest of Men ; condescending and gracious to the least and meanest of Children. How gentle, free and courteous in his Treatment of all ? How easy and natural did his vast Learning appear in every Company ? In what an artful & entertaining manner would He convey the most excellent Sentiments into our Minds ? How agreeably temper'd with a various mixture of Wit and Chearfulness ? The most knowing cou'd scarce ever leave him without knowing more, the most ungracious without some Impressions of Goodness, or any without a grateful Pleasure.

I speak not now of his more *retired Life*, which I have a great deal of Reason to know was in an eminent manner in the Mount with God. By this means He enjoyed a perpetual Calm : And as He constantly lived, so He died in Peace --- and no doubt is ascended to those heavenly Places where He delighted to converse every Day.

SCARCE any on Earth have gone thro' such a great Variety and constant Succession of extraordinary *Tryals*. But in these He lived a continual Sacrifice; and improved them, not to dishearten, but quicken Him to bring forth more Glory to God, and to be more useful to *Men*.

HE was in many respects like the ancient *ELIJAH*. And wherein He was tho't to be faulty — It was also much like Him, in a super-abounding Zeal for the Cause of God and *his People*.

THE Care of the *Churches* both in this and the Provinces round about, has for many Years lain chiefly upon Him: as He has been long a Father to the Ministers in them, and to Him they repaired in their difficult Cases for Light and Direction.

AND O how happy have been the *Pastors* of this great Town in having Him at our Head — who was ever as diffusive as full of all kinds of Knowledge and Wisdom — scarce ever at a Loss in any Emergence — ready to find out Expedients in difficult Cases; to solve the most perplex'd on a sudden; and in a few Minutes time, even while we were talking, to draw up, on his Knee, the State of the Controversy with proper Advices, in an accurate manner. And as we sat at his Feet as Children; his Speech dropped upon us, and we waited for Him as for the Rain, as the thirsty Earth for the Rain of Heaven.

AND now, like *Elisba* and the other *Sons* of the *Prophets*, we must see our *Master* taken away from our Head, and must see Him no more! How dismal does the Sound now enter our Ears — Dr. MATHER is gone, He is now no more among us, who has been so long an eminent Part of our Light and Glory! He shall return no more to his House, and the Places of his Studying, Conversing & Preaching shall know Him no more!

For *my self*, I must always account the particular Intimacy He was pleased to favour me with, as one of the richest Blessings of all my Life. And I can't but reflect with the deepest Regret on the precious Advantages I have carelessly lost, thro' a fond Expectation of his continuing longer. Especially when there was lodg'd in his Mind a great Treasure of secret and curious *History*, both of *New ENGLAND* and *Old*, from the Beginning of the Reign of King CHARLES I, to this Day: which He had strangely gotten from the ancient Fathers of these Plantations who were living in his Younger times, from our successive Agents and other Intelligent Persons who have come over hither for this *Fifty* Years, and from his vast Correspondence both at Home and Abroad: But is now irrecoverably vanished with Him.

THIS is Part of the extraordinary Man that is now gone from us. And "how does *the City*, tho' full
" of People, sit sad and solitary! How is she become
" as a Widow! She that is great among the Na-
" tions and Princess among the Provinces! Her
" Priests sigh, her Virgins are afflicted, and she is in
" Bitterness! For the LORD hath afflicted Her for
" the multitude of her Transgressions; and from the
" Daughter of *Zion* her Beauty is passed away! She re-
" members in the time of her Sorrows her pleasant
" Things that she had in the Days of old under
" his flaming Ministry. But now the LORD has
" made Her desolate -- He has made Her Strength
" to fall --- For these things I weep, mine Eye, mine
" Eye runs down with Water --- What shall I equal
" to Thee that I may comfort Thee, O virgin
" Daughter of *Zion*? For thy Breach is great like
" the Sea: who can heal Thee? And if we look to the
" Land; Behold Darkness and Sorrow, and the
" Light is darkned in the Heavens thereof!

BUT,
4. and lastly, SHOULD the *Remains* of our eminent
Ministers be highly prized & carefully improved by us--

A Funeral Sermon

Then here we see both our present Advantage and Incumbent Duty.

Tho' they are gone out of sight, yet they have left their *Mansles*, their excellent *Writings*; which by our due Improvement, may, thro' the Blessing of God, be as useful among us as ever. By these they continue to bare their Testimony against the Vices and Follies of Men: They continue to warn us of the destructive Ways of Sin, and to bare their Witness to the Wisdom and Happiness of being truly Religious.

AND if now they were suffered to call out of Heaven, as with the Voice of an *Angel* and the *Trump* of God; what a great Noise would they make in our Air, and how surprizingly alarm the World with merely the loud Repetition of what they have Published to excite and awaken us? And do the Discourses they have left behind them only want this mighty Sound, this forcible Motion of the Air about us, to pierce our Ears and reach our Hearts and convert us to God? Are they not in themselves as *suitable* to work on our rational Powers without it; To convince us of the miserable State we are in by Nature, of the dreadful and imminent Danger of continuing in it, and of the absolute need of hastening to CHRIST, that we may be certainly saved & happy for ever?—Surely Yes.

How great is then the Advantage of having these *Remains* of theirs? And how should we continue to Read them, that our Souls may live; as others have been happily made alive to God at the Hearing of them?

AND on this Account, how rich is our Privilege, in the numerous and excellent *Writings* of that *eminent Person* the Loss of whom we bewail this Day.

IN his *Style* indeed He was something singular, and not so agreeable to the Gust of the Age. But like his *manner of speaking*, it was very *emphatical*: And in all his Compositions on Divinity Subjects — with a mixture of various Learning, we clearly see the

the Beauty and Life of Religion, in the strongest Colours. The vital Actings of the Grace of God, inspired into the Souls of Men, and the manner of Turning and Living to God, were the continued Theme of his Preaching, Conversing and Writing — as a lively Expression of what He felt in his Heart, as the only Principle of immortal Happiness, and the most likely means to kindle the same Flame in others. And He delighted to carry us to the Heights of Piety.

He had also a constant Eye to the *inspired Writings* in all his own. He kept closely to them as the Light of his Feet; and has made it a principal Part of his Life to clear and urge them.

AND here I cannot forbear expressing my most earnest Wishes that *That* admirable Labour of his, The AMERICAN BIBLE, might soon appear in Publick to enlighten the World. An extraordinary Work, that his Heart has been set on from his early Days, and has taken Him up almost *Fifty Years* to compose. And as scarce any has run thro' a greater number of Volumes, or could do it with a greater Swiftmess; He has almost continually done it with a particular View to illustrate the sacred *Oracles*. He has made all sorts of Authors to conspire to this: If He met with any in the *Catalogues* either in *England* or *Holland*, that He imagin'd might help the Design; He would not rest till He had obtained it: And He has scarce left a curious Passage in any Writing of Fame, whether ancient or modern, that has cast a Light on any Part of the Scriptures, but He has put in it's Place in this most rich Collection. And to these He has added his own Improvements from his intimate Knowledge of the *Original Tongues*, of the most learned *Lexicons*, and the ancient Customs & Histories of the *Eastern Nations*.

BUT I must draw to a Close.

AND now what shall we do; but first *admire* and *praise* the boundless Grace of God, that has given such excellent Virtues to Men; and then *bewail* our Sins which have made this Earth unworthy of them; and

A Funeral Sermon

and have provok'd *the most High* to remove so *great a Light* so early from us, while He continued to shine in his Strength, and near a *Score* of Years before He could come to the Age of his Fathers.

AND upon his Rapture from us, shall we not now *look upwards* after Him thro' Hosts of Angels to the Worlds above? Where all his Hope is turn'd to Enjoyment, and all his Faith to the open Vision of *that wonderful Person*, whom He was forever admiring when He was here on Earth, & commending to others. And how shall we come to *secure our future Ascension* to the same heavenly Places; but by observing his Councils and imitating his bright Example? Who thro' Faith and Patience is gone before us to inherit the Promises. And what shall we do for *Power* to follow Him thither, but earnestly cry to the GOD of all Grace that He would fill us with his lively SPIRIT, uphold us with his mighty Hand, and conduct us by his perfect Council, till He raises us to the *same Inheritance*.

AND O! *There*, let us in the mean while extend our reaching Views! There -- where GOD appears thro' CHRIST in all his Glory to his People! In HIM the GODHEAD shines and shows Himself in that World of Light: and There let us earnestly & continually seek & long to behold and enjoy Him! There his People shall most openly & clearly view his Divine Perfections, his wise Designs, his wondrous Works, and the Smiles of his Face full shining on them! As they are ascending thither, they shall feel themselves *Transforming* in a wonderful manner; And when they enter his Presence, to their great Amazement, they shall appear to be like Him; they shall see themselves to be most agreeable to Him; and there they shall enjoy a most delightful Complacency in each other for ever! O *astonishing Happiness!* beyond our Conception, above our Wonder! That GOD alone can fully comprehend, and that will take up *External Ages* for both Men and Angels to express & admire!

10 APR 51

F. I. N. I. S.